

## **What is claimed is:**

**[Claim 1]** A system for avoiding a network address collision, the system comprising:

a server for distributing addresses for accessing a target network;

an originating network;

a computer connected to the originating network, the computer identified on the originating network with a first address, the first address having a first network address, the computer requesting a connection to the target network, the server returning a second address having the second network address to the computer in response to the computer's request, the computer comparing the first and second network addresses to determine whether there is a conflict, upon making a determination of a conflict between the first and second network addresses, the computer reporting that the second network address is in conflict.

**[Claim 2]** The system of claim 1 wherein the server is a virtual private network (VPN) server.

**[Claim 3]** The system of claim 1 wherein the server generates a different network address in response to the computer's report.

**[Claim 4]** The system of claim 1 wherein the computer reports that the second network address is in conflict by defining a reason code in an address acknowledgement message.

**[Claim 5]** The system of claim 3 wherein the server generates the different network address by selecting the different network address from a pool of pre-defined addresses.

**[Claim 6]** The system of claim 3 wherein the server generates the different network address by performing a mathematical operation on the first address.

**[Claim 7]** A method for avoiding a network address collision, the method comprising:

identifying a computer on an originating network with a first address, the first address having a first network address;

requesting a connection to a target network;

returning a second address having the second network address in response to the request step;

comparing the first and second network addresses to determine whether there is a conflict; and  
reporting that the second network address is in conflict, upon making a determination of a conflict between the first and second network addresses.

**[Claim 8]** The method of claim 7 wherein the requesting step further comprises requesting a connection through a virtual private network (VPN) server.

**[Claim 9]** The method of claim 7 further comprising:  
generating a different network address in response to the reporting step.

**[Claim 10]** The method of claim 7 wherein the reporting step further comprises defining a reason code in an address acknowledgement message.

**[Claim 11]** The method of claim 9 wherein the generating step further comprises selecting the different network address from a pool of pre-defined addresses.

**[Claim 12]** The method of claim 9 wherein the generating step further comprises performing a mathematical operation on the first address to determine the different network address.

**[Claim 13]** A computer readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to avoid a network address collision, the computer system having a client program and a server program, the computer system performing the steps of:  
identifying a computer on an originating network with a first address, the first address having a first network address;  
sending a request for a connection to a target network by the client program;  
receiving a second address having the second network address at the client program in response to the request;  
comparing the first and second network addresses by the client program to determine whether there is a conflict; and  
reporting to the server program that the second network address is in conflict, upon making a determination of a conflict between the first and second network addresses.

**[Claim 14]** The computer readable medium of claim 13 wherein the sending step further comprises requesting a connection through a virtual private network (VPN) server.

**[Claim 15]** The computer readable medium of claim 13 further comprising:  
generating a different network address by the server program in response to the reporting step.

**[Claim 16]** The computer readable medium of claim 13 wherein the reporting step further comprises defining a reason code in an address acknowledgement message.

**[Claim 17]** The computer readable medium of claim 15 wherein the generating step further comprises selecting the different network address from a pool of pre-defined addresses.

**[Claim 18]** The computer readable medium of claim 15 wherein the generating step further comprises performing a mathematical operation on the first address to determine the different network address.